

The China Mail.

No. 10,621.

號十月三年七十九百八千一英

HONGKONG, WEDNESDAY, MARCH 10, 1897.

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THE FAR EASTERN QUESTION.

THE FAR EASTERN QUESTION.
IV.—LI HUNG'S MISSION AND ITS REQUISITES.
Peking, Nov. 7, 1896.
(Continued.)

[illegible][illegible][illegible]

in that case we must build them ourselves, or let them be built by others, or let them decay without them. We are not going to have another stronghold of European influence in our midst like the Maritime Customs. The staunchest believers in China may well begin to lose faith in her when they see the complete loss of the last two years' harvest have been wasted upon her. They now put their last desperate hope in the pressure of financial necessity, which is bound to overtake her before long. The rule awakened which was to have resulted from the war now has to come from an empty pocket, and, given the nature of her rulers, the more sordid the grounds, upon which these expectations are based, the better perhaps the chances of their fulfilment.

CHINESE LABOUR ON SUGAR PLANTATIONS.

We take the following extract from the *Planners' Column of the Denimart Daily Chronicle*:

"The following," says a writer in the *Mackay Sugar Journal*, referring to labour in Hawaii "is an abstract of the terms of

contact of one of the Chinese labour union in Singapore, the aged Chinese labourers from the rough Hongkong.

Term of service, three years; hours of work, ten hours per day; wages, \$12.50 per month (U.S. gold); cost of introduction \$50; including houses, food, water, medicine, clothing, and other necessities, \$10 per month in 21 and 40 years condition, physically fit.

In case of labourers deserting, the Society refunds to the planter \$1.39 for each month of unfulfilled service.

As a rule, the labourers are good, steady workers, and are not given to stomachic sickness or staying away from work. The rate of wages and other charges is above given and about the same for Japanese cane labourers. The Japanese are usually somewhat higher paid, the former frequently obtaining up to \$16 per month for field work and up to \$20 for special employment. Hawaiians—who are cane labourers at jobs they like, such as hedges, trucking, or boat and wharf work, are generally, get the highest wages, viz., \$25 per month. Broadly speaking, labourers pay varies from \$12 to \$20 per month.

At some plantations the "company" system is in vogue, the labourers being employed some two years. On Ewa, gangs of labourers undertake the cultivation of land after planting at the rate of six acres per man. They water, weed, manure (provided), and load, receiving as their remuneration for the work, a share of the produce, amounting about eighteen months to mature.

"The system on which labour is managed struck me as being one good reason for the excellent character of the field work done on most plantations. This is a business of training the labourers to be men who must facilitate the handling of labourers." Under the manager who superintends the work, the labourers are intended nations generally is the "overseer" or head man, who is responsible for the management of the labourers, and the management of stock and implements.

The overseer has under him, in turn, the ordinary labourers, who have gangs of 40 to 50 labourers each, and whose sole duty is to lay in this field day constant work. The labourers are to the overseer and keeping all up to the desired standard. On the irrigation plantations the number of labourers to the lunn rarely exceeds 30, and the work needs more careful supervision. The labourers are paid for the water and water—while in the rainfall districts above

of labourers per lime is customary. The hours are, for per day in the field, according to contract, but it is customary to be made easier. The work is very easy to practice. Previously, it was understood, a system of having lumps of the same uniformity as the labourers was common, but this was found to be unsatisfactory, and after a thorough trial, was abandoned. The lumps of day are principally used, because they do the field work "all and steady" with the labour. The overseer (in conjunction with the accountant) keeps all records and returns relative to cultivation. He is usually a thoroughly practical and well informed agriculturist, possesses considerable experience, and managers are frequently drawn from men of the rank."

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Who are the most inventive people on the earth? With that national pride that sets so easily on our shoulders, we answer, "Americans." And so we said. The number of patents granted by the Commission of Patents, in round figures, 23,000, the United States make a good second with 23,500, but there is a sad falling-off for the third place, which is taken by France with 1,600; then comes Germany with 5,500, and Switzerland 1,500. In Italy seven out of every 100,000 of the population patent an invention, whilst the proportion in Great Britain is 58, the United States 39, and Switzerland 50. "In England 20 per cent. of the patents are obtained by foreigners. Of the patents issued out in Austria, no less than 70 per cent. in favour of foreigners, whilst the proportion of foreign patentees in France and Italy is 47 and 67 per cent. respectively.

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